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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: ARGENTINA AT THE G20 SUMMIT; US-ARGENTINE TIES; IRANIAN REACTION TO ARGENTINE DEMAND ON THE AMIA ATTACK; BRAZIL'S LEADING ROLE IN THE HONDURAN CRISIS; 09/28/09; BUENOS AIRES

11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Weekend international opinion pieces are mostly related to Argentina's bid to position itself for a return to international capital markets; the status of the US-Argentine bilateral relationship; Iranian President Ahmadinejad's blunt rejection of Argentine President Kirchner's demand to extradite those Iranian citizens involved in the criminal assault against the AMIA; and Brazil's leading role in the Honduran crisis.

12. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Argentina signs G20 statement and agrees to IMF controls"

Leading "Clarín's" columnist Walter Curia, on special assignment in Pittsburgh, writes (09/26), "In an unexpected turn, Argentina committed yesterday to letting the IMF regularly assess the status of its economy so that it is in line with the commitments undertaken at the G20 Summit..."

"According to the statement, the Finance Ministers of the Group will make progress on a 'mutual consultation' procedure to evaluate the 'collective impact' of their economic policies on world economy.

"The Government has opposed any kind of IMF audit ever since it cancelled the country's debt to the multilateral lending agency in 2005. The rejection of a regular audit of its economy as per IMF Article Four is against Argentina's financial needs and hinders the country's negotiations to pay back its debt to the Paris Club and holdouts (bondholders who refused to participate in the 2005 restructuring of the defaulted debt).

"A high-ranking source in the Argentine Government who was consulted by 'Clarín' admitted that Argentina agreed to the IMF review... but 'this will not change the direction of our economic policy.'

"However, the commitment could have an unexpected implication for Argentina, whose statistics are truly vulnerable.

"In two recent IMF reports on world economic prospects, the IMF accepted the (Argentine) Government's inflation rate, although it included a paragraph with a warning that it differs from private estimates.

"During the President's tour, the Government warned once again that Argentina will not accept conditions on its foreign financial front."

- "A country that sways between rage and error"

Daily-of-record "La Nación's" political analyst Joaquín Morales Sola opines (09/27), "The Argentine diplomacy's efforts to underline the

protocol meetings between Obama and Cristina (Kirchner) in the context of multilateral meetings only underscore the importance of a missing event. The Argentine President is the only Latin American president who is a G20 member who has never held a private meeting with Obama. The other three presidents (those of Canada, Brazil and Mexico) were received during their official visits in Washington, interested as Americans are in reaching a common hemispheric position.

"A high-ranking member of Obama's staff, who is crucial in Latin American affairs, said, 'You believe that you acted against a US president but we believe you acted against the US.' He was talking about what the Kirchners did during the Mar del Plata Summit in front of Bush..."

"The same USG officer asked Argentina not to repeat the Mar del Plata experience during the Trinidad and Tobago Summit, the first one in the Obama era... Anyway, Cristina Kirchner lectured for 45 minutes at the Trinidad and Tobago Summit about the alleged virtues of the Mar del Plata Summit in front of Obama. It was music to Chavez' ears, who was there, as well as disappointing to Obama, who was also there.

"Why, then, Cristina is desperate to have a good relationship with Obama if she is not willing to undo what her husband did? She would not even need to make an automatic alliance with the US. Obama's Washington does not want her to do so. As a matter of fact, Lula calls Obama once a month at least, and the Brazilian president is not obedient with Washington or its interests, but he is reliable in whatever really matters."

- "Iran does not cede to the Argentine demand"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" front-pages an opinion piece by its New York-based correspondent, Alberto Armendariz, who writes (09/26), "Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad bluntly rejected Argentine President Cristina Kirchner's request to submit to the Argentine justice the Iranian citizens suspected of being involved in the criminal attack against the AMIA Jewish community center in 1994: 'I would recommend that the Argentine Government think of the interests of the whole Argentine people rather than pursuing the interests of a Zionist minority in Argentina.'

"... His blunt attitude was in obvious contrast to his own remarks during a brief meeting with Hispanic mass media in this city just a few hours before, during which he assured he wants to strengthen Tehran's ties to the region..."

"... Ahmadinejad also clarified that he does not intend to have military cooperation with Venezuela and took the occasion to criticize the planned US military presence in Colombia: 'Some imperialistic behaviors are against the change they say they want. The development of military bases does not help the peoples. Militarism does not benefit humanity. What it badly needs is greater cooperation to eradicate poverty in Latin America and other places of the world.'

"Questioned about his controversial enriched uranium program, for which he was imposed sanctions by the UN Security Council (which fears it could be used to manufacture nuclear weapons), Ahmadinejad reiterated it only has peaceful and civil purposes.

"... After the controversy sparked by his past comments putting in doubt the Jewish Holocaust, this time Ahmadinejad avoided referring to the topic and he deviated his response to Israel's killings of Palestinian civilians - 'We are against any killings of any kind of people.'"

- "Brazil's leading role in Honduras"

Leading "Clarín" carries an op-ed piece by political analyst Jorge Castro, who opines (09/27), "Brazil's decision to offer its embassy in Tegucigalpa to ousted President Manuel Zelaya to use on his return is obviously a major event (as important as the return of the Honduran president), which changes one of Itamaraty's fundamental policies of the last 100 years.

".... Itamaraty's foreign policy priority is to regain international importance and, therefore, it deploys a strategy of indirect rapprochement to the world power system (the US/G7)... The premise on which such foreign policy was based was that there was a substantial fracture between Northern and Southern Latin America. This is why it promoted the creation of UNASUR.

"Now, Brazil has become a crucial player in the main crisis of Northern Latin America, which takes place in Honduras. It does not act in a shared or multilateral way but individually as a major power.

"This is an historic piece of news. Today, Brazil represents the international community in a crisis that gets more serious and polarized and that is escalating."

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MARTINEZ